

701  
18

# A SERMON Preached before the UNIVERSITY O F OXFORD, On St. Andrews-day.

---

By *THO. STRIPLING*, M. A. and  
Chaplain of *New-College*.

---

---

*L O N D O N:*

Printed by *J. Grantham*, for *Edw. Gellibrand*, at  
the *Golden-Ball* in *St. Pauls Church-yard*, 1681.

762

## 2 T I M. II. 12.

*If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.*

**T**HERE never was any Nation so barbarous or illiterate, but still had some notions of a God, and of that worship and adoration that ought to be paid unto him, as the Author and Conserver of their Beings; but such is the corruption of human nature, such the perverseness of our wills and affections, that even the best of them have been always unwilling to obey his injunctions, when they went beyond what the Law of Nature dictated unto them: To do as they would be done unto, to love the man that did them a kindness, these precepts might be consented to; but to do good for evil, to love those that hated them, and to suffer afflictions with patience, and injuries without the least thought of revenge, these are rejected as soon as proposed: To offer in sacrifice a Bull or a Goat, the firstlings of their Cattel, or first fruits of their Grounds, they are willing, when it is proposed

as a means to appease the Divine wrath ; but to crucifie their members, and sacrifice their beloved lusts, these are more dear than all other worldly enjoyments ; and to part with them they cannot be wrought upon. Thus, although the Gospel for the excellency of its precepts, the nobleness and generosity of its design, and its admirable fitness for the accomplishment of it, was most agreeable to the purest and sublimest Reason ; consisting chiefly in a regulation of the mind and spirit, and such kind of practices as might promote the good of humane societies, and most effectually conduce to the perfecting our natures, and rendering them happy ; yet because it was fraught with such precepts as were destructive to their complacencies and carnal securities, and laid the greatest restraints upon their passions and inclinations, by no means complying with the former, or answering the expectations of the latter, it found no better entertainment at first in the Gentile world, than to be derided and scoffed at, and its professors persecuted even unto death, by those with whose interest it could no ways consist : for being immersed in all manner of sensual pleasure, and wholly become slaves to their passions and their lusts, their judgments were corrupted and

and biassed by their vicious inclinations, and 'twas as bad as death to them to undergo the strict forbearances Christianity would oblige them to. This Religion, say they, would force us to part with all whatsoever renders our lives pleasant in the world, our lusts to be satisfied by no means, injuries and affronts not only to be forgiven, but all kind of offices to be returned instead of revenge ; tribulation and persecution to be endur'd without the least regret, or the greatest detriment, even to the loss of our lives, to be suffered with constancy and patience : This cannot be endured, Nature prompts every one to seek his own preservation, and maintain his being ; this is the ready way to destroy it : That which animates and enlivens our Souls, and makes them capable of performing actions suitable to the dignity of their natures, is by the severity of this Religion withheld ; that which makes our lives happy and pleasant must be parted with ; Father and Mother, Friends and Relations, and fair and ample possessions must be left and forsaken : This can be nothing but the politick devices of men, to whom Providence has not been so kind, who endeavour to render our lives as uneasy as their own. To bear injuries patiently derogates too from that prin-

principle of magnanimity ingrafted in man, who is not yet reduced so low, or become so degenerate as not to revenge an injury, not to do harm to him that plots and contrives his ruin; and we may as well deny sustenance to the body when its hungry, or take no notice of an object presented to the sight, as deny to gratifie our inclinations, or satisfie our domineering lusts; Nature is equally concerned in both: But oh the sottishness of carnal reasoning! How miserably art thou mistaken vain man, making thy self no more than equal to the Beasts that perish? to what purpose then hast thou receiv'd those noble faculties of thy soul, thy understanding and thy will, but with the one, that thou mightest apprehend aright what is best for thee, and chuse that which is so with the other? So that if thou have the greatest aversion to what is commanded thee by thy sensual faculties, yet here the intellectual are to be called in to thy aid, which presently will pass their sentence, If what thou sufferest be for thy good, it is to be embraced. The certainty of which assertion we have evidently set forth unto us in sundry places of Scripture, as well as in this of Saint *Paul to Timothy*, where he stirs him up to caution, care and diligence, and fidelity in the discharge

charge of his office, on occasion of the creeping heresies of the *Gnosticks* stollen in among them, which had much debauched the people of *Asia*, by indulging them in all manner of licentious practices : He advises him not to suffer himself, or his flock to be inticed or to fall in love with their profane Discourses and pernicious Doctrines, but to repel them and all their sollicitations with the greatest industry, and be ready to undergo the severest afflictions, rather than to part with any precept of that Gospel delivered unto him, or to recede from the least tittle of his Faith : And this Saint *Paul* does, by putting him in remembrance how he himself had suffered at *Antioch*, *Iconium*, and *Lystra*, and how the Lord had delivered him out of all, *Chap.*

3. 11. However if it were God's Will that he should not escape his enemies hands, but that they should prevail so far, even to the taking his life, yet he had this comfort and assurance, this was most certain, a faithful saying, That if we are dead with him, we shall live with him ; if we suffer, we shall likewise reign with him. In which words we have a duty and a reward annexed unto it : In the Duty I shall consider these following particulars :

1st. That to be a true Christian, doth imply a necef-

necessity of suffering ; and that because Christianity is a suffering Religion. *2dly.* The Reasonableness of suffering, and that, 1. Because Christ commands it. 2. Because he suffered for us. 3. That it is our greatest interest to suffer. 4. I shall consider the Reward we purchase.

First then, To be a true Christian doth imply a necessity of suffering ; and that because Christianity is a suffering Religion.

Christianity bears such a contrariety unto the inclinations of our natures, and the inticements of our flesh, the allurements of the world, and the suggestions of the Devil ; that they who do sincerely embrace its precepts, must necessarily suffer much by these Three potent enemies, against which we in our Baptism are signed with the Cross, as a Flag of defiance.

*First,* We suffer by the inclinations of our Natures, and the inticements of our Flesh.

If we look upon man as he is by Nature, and as he is a Christian, we shall find a great alteration ; by Nature he pursues every object that invites, and makes use of any instruments that serves his designs ; he resolves to compass what he desires, and he will gratifie his passions at any rate ; he considers only his present enjoyment, without the dismal consequences that attend his actions :

( 9 )

actions : if his Endeavours are Disappointed he thinks himself miserable, but if they succeed, in a most prosperous condition. The case is quite otherwise as a Christian, he is so far altered from what he was before , that he seems to have changed his very being ; for whereas before his desires were as large as his Nature, and he might let fly at whatsoever his humour or his fancy did suggest unto him, his actions before free and directed to what his lusts prompted him, now he is to steer by a regular Compas, to be circumscribed within the streight limits of Right and Wrong, he is to scan over every object, and not in the least to deviate from his Rule, or let a circumstance be wanting , or out of its place ; so far from giving way to his Passions, that he must stifle them in their birth, so far from pampering his lusts, that he is strictly enjoyned to crucifie them; so that the man must necessarily endure great conflicts within himself : his carnal Inclinations direct him this way , and his Religion commands him to steer a quite contrary course ; what the one inclines him to persue and love , the other bids him fly and hate ; what the one would have him cherish , the other obliges him to mortifie : For he that is Christs hath crucified the flesh with the Affections and Lusts thereof;

thereof; a severe Discipline this! in which a man must act his fiercest Anger on his dearest Friends; thus man suffers by living in enmity with himself, by stabbing his Desires and crucifying his beloved Lusts.

Nature could never yet suggest into any one, the hatred of his own flesh or the lusts thereof; but Cristianity which is not framed to the Di-  
-states of depraved nature, must, and will readily  
pass sentence upon them, if they were good or  
profitable they were to be permitted; but be-  
ing evil and hurtful by all means to be sup-  
prest: but alas! our domineering lusts, and rebel-  
lious passions are not so soon conquered; it will  
be no easie thing to bring the body under,  
when it has been given to Luxury; to use it to  
temperance and Sobriety when it has been habi-  
tuated to excess; 'twill be no easie matter to re-  
strain and curb the emissions of anger, when  
they have been permitted the loose rein; or to  
lay aside the hatred of an enemy, when we have  
often tasted the seeming pleasure of revenge:  
And then how hard a matter will it be to bring  
down pampered wantonness, by the bread and  
water of affliction? For what a masterless Ty-  
rant is youth in the height of blood? how im-  
patient is he if he is deprived of his former ca-  
resses?

( 11 )

resses? how will he fret, and rage, and hazard any thing, estate and life are both devoted to her, and he will part with the one, and lay down the other, rather than he will quit his pleasures, or rest himself from the amorous embraces of his Beloved? So that considering how prone our inclinations are to vice, and how hard it is for us to overcome them, we must of necessity suffer much before we can bring them under, and make them yield obedience to our Reason and the Gospel precepts, that we may be true Christians.

The next enemy we have to ingage with, and suffer by, is the world; Saint John commands us in his Epistle, *not to set our affections on things of the world, for the love of the world is enmity with God*, who ought to be the greatest object of our love; so that we cannot be said to love God, if the love of the world dwell within us. By the world is meant the wicked, the wicked world, the greatest part of mankind, who are so far from obeying the Gospel maxims, and those precepts Christianity obliges them too, that they may vie with the very heathen in their evil customes. How do they admire and dote upon the ostentatious bravery of their pomps and vanities, outdoing those that they used in

their , Triumphs and their Games ? How do they indulge themselves in Luxury , Riot , and immoderate drinkings, exceeding their *Bacchanals* and *Saturnals*? nay how much more do they adorn it's honors and riches, Idolizing them as the sole Divinities? how do they consecrate their whole care in their acquest, and make them the design of all their projects, and center of all their actions? how common is it to see the Ambitious man sweat with the pains he takes to arrive to some eminency, where he may securely tread upon those, who before were his equals? how does he employ his whole strength, and credit of all his friends to be above them? how common is it to see the covetous worldling spending the greatest of his life in oppressing and grinding the face of the poor, and then set breading upon his bags, thanking his Age that hath made him deaf to the louder cries of the Orphan & Widows? how do another sort of men indulge themselves in all manner of sensuality, drowning their Reason, and suffocating their bodies with the noisom vapours of putrefaction and rottenness, and then declame against the severe life and devout actions of the true Christian?

In the midst of these Sons of the Earth is the devout Christian placed, who must expect to suffer

( 13 )

suffer from them all; for his Innocency upbraids their vicious Lives; and the Maxims he observes contradicts their beloved Principles; and therefore he is derided for his Religious behaviour towards his God, and scoffed at for his great zeal in the observance of his Precepts. For his humility and meekness, duties so often recommended to us by our Saviour, and a blessedness pronounced unto them, yet by the Ambitious man he is accounted as one of a servile Disposition, a Temper fit only for the Abject; one of no Spirit or design in the World; by no means qualified for the Devices of the Politick, or fit to manage the weighty affairs, and subtile Intrigues of State. For his Liberality and Charity to the Poor, Precepts so strictly enjoyned, and without which we are no better than sounding brass, or tinckling cimbals; Yet he is accused of the covetous worldling, of the greatest Simplicity and Folly, throwing away the greatest part of his Estate upon those, he can expect no requital from; one that is short flighted, and looks not beyond the affairs of a day, has no care for futurity; when hunger, or thirst, cold or nakedness may oppres him, then he has nothing to supply the one, or cloth the other; whilst he may sing a *requiem* to his soul,

soul, having secured himself, by laying up in store for many years. For his Temperance and Sobriety, he is by the sensual man reckoned a mere puny, not fit for society, or to keep company with the most refined sort of men, the wits of the age. And for his Chastity, that is imputed to his Weakness, and Impotence. But his sufferings were very light, if his enemies perceiv'd no farther; but they often times take away his Liberty and his Life too; for though one would think his innocence might here protect him, yet those who are employed in a work by the Devil, have several ways to bring it about, and boggle not at any thing to effect their Designs: if their first Projects do not work effectually, they will themselves commit the greatest wickedness (as *Nero* did in firing the City) rather than miss their aims, and alledge the poor Christian to be the Author, makeing sure of his destruction, and avoid their own.

Thus is the sincere Christian look'd upon as fit for nothing but to be imposed on a most abject, silly, pitiful Mortal; and the Precepts he obeys altogether ineffectual to render his life comfortable here, or happy hereafter; but it's by such that prefer the bewitching pleasures of sin for

( 15 )

for a season, that wholly give themselves to their sensual Appetites, and that never were acquainted with that Comfort and Satisfaction, that arises from a serene and quiet Conscience in the performance of Christs Precepts. The Devout Christian knows that the way to be exalted in Christs Kingdom, is to be humble and meek, and wonders at the aspirings of the Ambitious, and that great Toil and Labour he takes to arrive to the top of that Pinnacle, where his standing is uneasie and his fall deadly; he despises the glittering of that gold, the covetous mans eyes are dazzled with, and he himself enchanted by; he is so far from Idolizing it, that he counts it no better than the Earth he treads on, and can part with it with much more eagerness than he received it; by this means laying up for himself Treasures in Heaven, and does not in the least distrust God (if he have wherewithal) to feed when he is hungry, that feedeth the Ravens, and Cloth him too, that cloaths the Lillies of the fields. He is content to go alone in paths of Piety and Virtue, flying the Company and Jollity of the World, which may make him hazard his innocence, if not contract their vices; he will not converse with the Impious and Profane, and therefore

776  
 therefore they shoot out their arrows against him, even bitter words: But makes his Vertue his companion, and seeks his greatest Felicity in his Solitude and the Tranquillity of his Soul; if his thirst be quenched, and his hunger satisfied, he matters not their floods of liquors, or their costly Delicacies: In a word, if he have but food and raiment, things convenient and necessary for him, he is therewith content: But if they proceed, by their Hellish Policy, to take away this his Liberty and his Life too, then he resolves patiently to suffer for his God, who he never has seen; which is the Crown of his Faith, the Confidence of his Hope, and his greatest Charity.

The next Enemy we suffer by, is the Devil, and he is the most inveterate; whose chiefest business it has been, since he was banished, by his cunning Artifice and crafty Wiles, to delude and entrap weak men, that he hath a share of those Torments into which he was cast, for his presumptuous sins; not that he does it to alleviate his Pains, or render his Torments the less grieveous; but that he endeavours to thwart Gods holy Purposes, in tempting those to commit sin, whom God hath

( 17 )

hath consigned to happiness. Thus no sooner had Man his being, but he Plots and Contrives his ruine; and having such lucky success in his first enterprise, doubts not of a second overthrow: but he perceives that the Christian is grown wary, and his bait that worked so effectual heretofore, will not so easily decoy him into Destruction: 'tis not now to perswade them, that they shall be as God that will effect his designs; and therefore he considers the Temperature of our Bodies, and Disposition of our Minds; and where he finds what sin we are most prone to, and where most inclinable to let it in, there he sets up his Standard, and Assaults us in this Posture: he stands using his cunning Devices to undermine us, and his Strategems to overcome us; sometimes he subtilly dissembles, making shew of some Good that may accrue unto us, to expel out of our innocent minds all jealousie and suspicion of Evil; he gilds over his baits, to make them seem pleasant to the eye; but if they be searched into, we find them (like the Apples of *Sodom*) nothing but stench and rottenness within; if his specious pretences are rejected, how cunningly soever varnished over with the colour of Virtue, so that his designs are blasted,

C

and

and his endeavours to work upon us rendered ineffectual, then he will counterfeit flight to make us draw off our Garrisons; and when we are eager in the persuit, as *Hannibal* did to the *Romans*, he returns, sets upon us, and gives us a general Defeat. But he that is a good Soldier of Jesus Christ, always keeps a strong guard about him, does not leave the least gap, through which the enemy may enter; but plants his strongest Garrison there, where he is most likely to be assaulted; and then though he suffer the greatest hardships, undergo the greatest damage, and be beset with the greatest danger, even the losing of his life; yet he girds up his loins, and summons up all his faculties, and nothing is able to daunt his Courage, or dishearten his Industry in withstanding all the assaults of his Enemy; he resolves to lay down his life rather than yield unto him; and thinks not this Precept of Christ too severe and rigid, grievous or unreasonable, boldly to follow the Captain of his Salvation. Which brings me to the Second thing I design to speak to, The reasonableness of Suffering; and that, First, because Christ commands it. Secondly, Because he suffered for us.

Christ's Precepts are so full fraught with Purity

( 19 )

rity and Holiness, Justice and Goodness, that they may justly challenge their pedigree from Heaven, and to have deriv'd their beings from the Father of goodness; so that he does require nothing, but what is most reasonable. He that acts according to the eternal reasons of an Omnipotent Power, of which ours in its primitive Perfection and Purity was but a Glance and Reflection; He that appeals to the faculties of men touching the equity of his Dispensations, as God did to his People; *Are not my ways equal? are not your ways unequal?* Can no more discard Reason, than he can his Being; and that not because he is not Omnipotent, but because it would argue in him an Imperfection; but because whatever runs counter to our inclination, is apt to be irreconcilable to our reason; and that was the Reason that Christianity in its infancy met with such cold entertainment in the world, because men so value themselves of their reason, that they will admit nothing but what hath stood the tryal of that criterion; and thereupon some have presumed to dictate to Heaven, and prescribe to the Almighty: Because, I say, that some have arrived to that pitch of impudence, to reason Christ out of his Divinity; its no wonder if others, when their flesh

and blood is concerned, endeavour to argue him out of his Humanity, I mean, the reasonableness of his Precepts; they look no farther than their outside, and because they seem terrible to their flesh, they presently conclude them against their reason, and run like Children from their friends, when they have put vizards on: But if they would take the pains to consider the design of them, and the reward they purchase, they would find them to be for their greatest good, and exactly consonant to the dictates of right reason. For what can be more reasonable, than that hardships and sufferings should accompany those Precepts, to which God has annexed so great a reward? and that the way should be steep, rugged and difficult, that leads to eternal glory? Nature hath prepared Crowns for the Valiant, and Triumphs for the Conqueror; but he shall wade for them through blood; he shall first undergo the Severity of Military Discipline, the hardships of the Field, and the danger of a Battle. God hath also provided a *Canaan* for his Children, and a Land flowing with Milk and Honey for his Inheritance; but they shall first run through an Egyptian bondage; they shall travel for it through the Red-Sea; they shall endure the hardships

( 21 )

ships of the Wilderness, & the *tedium* of a War : And he that shall murmur or repine at the one, shall certainly be defeated of the other. For so it happened of all the Children of *Israel* that were numbred in *Sina*, not one beside *Caleb* and *Joshua* were permitted to enter into the Promised Land, because they provoked God to Anger in the Wilderness, and murmur'd at him in the Desart. Christ has likewise purchased for us a better *Canaan*, even eternal mansions in Heaven ; but men must not expect to go thither on a Feather-bed, lest it should prove but the delusion of a Dream, and they awake into a worser Eternity ; He that was made perfect through sufferings, hath told us, *Mat. 7. 14.* that, that way is narrow, and that there is not room for a Drunkard to stagger in, or the Latitudinarian to expatiate either his Principles or his Practice ; he must crucifie his Affections and Lusts, that will share with him in his Kingdom ; he must endure Persecutions and Sufferings, yea, and Death it self for his sake, who hath redeemed him from a worse : In a word, he must take up his Cross that will be his Disciple ; and he that will wear a Crown of Glory, must, at least, be ready to wear a Crown of Thorns.

This being then evident, that because Christ hath

hath commanded us to suffer, therefore it is reasonable; I shall farther make it appear to be highly the reasonableness of it; and that,

Because Christ commands it.

Christ commands his Disciples nothing, but he enforces it with an Argument from himself; he must first suffer for us, and through these sufferings enter into Glory; then he enjoyns them as the means for us to arrive unto it; for thus he told his Apostles before they were sent forth to the conversion of the world; *You are my sheep, and I am the good Shepherd, yet I must send you among Wolves, and expose you unto the unmerciful fury and rage of cruel Tyrants, who will not only slight and contemn your Doctrin and Persons, but force you to undergo the sharpest pains and exquisite tortures; and for your farther encouragement, deprive you of your Honour and your Lives for my sake, after they have dealt so by me.* The sadness of the news might somewhat surprise them, when but a little before they were questioning among themselves, which should be greatest in his Kingdom; but it did not at all abate their courage! or dishearten them from executing their office. Men certainly much strengthned from above! most of them poor and of low descent, but Fishermen, who could not boast

( 23 )

boast of that sprightly blood, great Heroes pretend to have running in their veins; but through Gods assistance, there was nothing able to daunt the courage of a Christian, but they resolved to behave themselves as stout and undisturbed in their sufferings for Christ, as they were willing to dye for him their Lord and Master, who not long after was treated by his enemies, as he had foretold; for his Conversation was slighted and contemned, his Doctrine derided and scoffed at; and his Miracles were said to be done by the help of Magick, and the assistance of the Prince of Devils: his person was vilified, and soon after put to the most Barbarous, Cruel, and Shameful Death, that of the Croſs: And to behold the Son of God, Omnipotence it ſelf, thus hanging on the Croſs, cruelly murdered, by the most wicked, evil and malicious men; to behold him, who could have Legions of Angels to his rescue, or have destroyed his enemies with the leaſt blaſt of his mouth, willingly ſubmitting himſelf to the will and power of his cruel Murderers, and all this for our ſakes, to make a full Attonement and Satisfaction to his Father for our ſins, and free us from the wrath to come; Certainly we cannot grudge or repine,

pine when we suffer for him, or tax his Precepts of the least unreasonableness; but rejoice, as did his holy Apostles, who counted it all joy, when they were to enter into Tribulation; for they betook themselves to their *Officium*, as soon as they had received their Commission; and Preached Christs Doctrine with the purest Zeal, and in the true Evidence and Demonstration of the Holy Spirit; and for their pains and travel, they were traduced for the vilest offenders, and made as the filth of this world; they were hated and pursued as enemies and disturbers of the Peace: In a word, they were vilified and contemned, exposed to Pain and Tortures, and then to Death it self; all which they suffered with perfect Constancy and Patience, being assured that it was for his sake, who had endured much more for them.

Thus was our Religion and her Votaries treated for Christ, at its first entrance into the world; no sooner had the glimmerings of the Gospel been displayed, but presently clouds and vapours rise up, which strive to extinguish its Light, or, at least, so to interpose, that they might hinder its progress from coming to those that lived in Darkness and in the shadow of Death: but as they were altogether

( 25 )

gether unable to put out its Light, so neither could they stop it in its progress: For the All-wise Providence was pleased to design, that Christianity should be propagated by Sufferings, and grow strong by those very means which were used to weaken and extirpate it; for it was not to be done with Arms, or Faction, or the Favour of great Men; not by the cunning Sophistry of Philosophers, or the persuasive Rhetorick of Orators; only by a naked proposal of plain evident Truth, with a firm resolution of suffering and dying for it; by which it hath subdued all kind of Persecution, and surmounted whatever discouragement or resistance could be layd in its way; *Sanguis enim Martyrum erat semen Ecclesiae*: which suddenly grew up and spread its branches through every City of the World and Province. For their greatest Enemies, when they beheld such an undaunted courage in asserting, such constancy in professing that Religion which would infallibly work their destruction; were inclined to believe the hand of God to have upheld, and strengthned them, and that it could proceed from no other but him, they presently commencted Christians, and believed that to suffer for Christ, was their greatest Interest, and to dye for him their greatest Gain.

D

Which

Which brings me to the next particular in order to be spoken to :

*That to suffer for Christ is our greatest Interest.*

It has always been found a very hard matter to perswade the Sensual man to believe, that Sufferings can either procure his Pleasure or his Profit ; for looking no farther than his sensual Pleasure, and his present Enjoyment, he lays out his whole care in the Preservation of himself, in the Satisfaction of his desires, in defending his body from harm, and securing himself from any thing that may annoy or hurt him : This Principle is pressed so home unto him by the Dictates of his Nature, that he takes it for granted , he is to deny all commands , neglect all injunctions to the contrary ; for he is sure, if he fails in this, all his pleasures suddenly vanish, and his greatest enjoyments come to an end ; and poor man he miserably perishes, and for want of due care of himself, procures his own destruction. But, alas ! if he would but consider and search into himself, it would presently appear unto him, that by how much the more Pleasure and Satisfaction a man takes from the delight of his Mind, than he does from that of his Body ; by so much he is the happier , as to his present estate ; for besides the excercising of his Vertues, Humility , Patience, and Charity, which

( 27 )

which otherwise would lye hid, he enjoys the security of his Mind, a quiet and peaceable Conscience void of offence, that fears no evil, because it has done none: And that there is such a real Joy concealed under apparent Miseries, is evident from the Sufferer himself; that holy Pride he discovers in all his actions, those pleasing looks that continually possess his Countenance, are certain evidence of the tranquility of his Mind. Tempests do not disturb his repose, and he never seems more unshaken, than when he is tossed about; he is so stable and permanent in all his disasters, that if the world should fall in pieces, he would not be concerned. Then let the Worldling lay aside his Honours and his Riches, his Pride and Luxury, which are so far from procuring real Pleasure, that there is nothing arises from them, but trouble and dissatisfaction. The Greatest the Ambitious man aims at, is no longer pleasant unto him, than when he is in the persuit; for when he possesses it, he is pushed on by the inquietude of his desires, and thursts after fresh honours: Riches never satisfie, for when they are locked up in the Chest, the desire is still after more. Pride and Luxury have so little content in them, that one is a Disease of the Mind, the other

other breeds diseases to afflict the Body; nothing can be said to be permanent, or to have contentment in it, but the joy of a wise man, who rests secure when the greatest violence is exercised on his person; whose Mind stands firm as a Rock, when his body is shaken asunder; and the afflicting body does not so much lose his courage, as it strengthens and confirms it; he resembles those Stars that are clearest in the most Tempestuous Weather, and have the greatest lustre when they shine through Mists and Foggy Exhalations. This being premised, I shall proceed to make it appear, to be his greatest interest to suffer for Christ, even the loss of his Life; because it procures his eternal happiness in the world to come: But here we have him objecting, that God-Almighty cannot love the man who he makes the object of his wrath; or consign him to happiness whom he so miserably Punishes and Afflicts; that he can never be fit company for Saints and Angels in Heaven, who was contemned and hated, afflicted and tormented even unto Death here on earth. But the Example of our Saviour is a sufficient answer to this, who was a man of sorrows, rejected and despised, Wounded for our Transgressions, bruised for our iniquities.

We

( 29 )

We are assured that God is Holy, Wise, and Good, and that he can do nothing misbecoming or unworthy of those Attributes; and therefore we ought to rest satisfied, that it is his Will that we shall be thus qualified for Heaven, that he brings us unto him by the very same means and method he did his Beloved Son; for he chastises every one whom he receiveth, *that these light afflictions may work for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*, 2 Cor. 4. 17.

But Christ, he reply's, died for us to preserve our lives, and he will not have us to dye, or destroy us, after he has given us our lives; but he dyed not to preserve our temporal lives, but to procure for us eternal life in Heaven; to obtain which, we must suffer even the loss of present life for him; *for he that endeavours to save his life, shall lose it; and he that loses it for Christ's sake shall save it*, Mark 8. 35. Life must be despised here on earth, if we will enjoy an honourable place in Heaven; so that Martyrdom is an ingenious Tyrant, that kills us to save us; and an innocent crime, that overwhelms with confusion, to Crown us with Glory: If we believe *Tertullian*, it is an obliging Cruelty, that tears away our lives, to give them us again; that despises us, to make us rich; and making

making us to be imitators of the Son of God, assures us to have part in his felicity. This made St. *Paul* to rejoice, that he was thought worthy to suffer for Christ Jesus; and this made the Primitive Christians prefer Disgrace to Honour, Poverty to Riches, Torments to Pleasures, and Death it self to Life; their minds were so enchanted with the hopes of Futurity, that it charmed their Grief, confirmed their Constancy, and rendred them victorious in the midst of all their Afflictions. For with what Patience and Constancy did they suffer in the times of Persecution, when they were hurried from one place to another, not suffered to confer with freedom, or breath with safety! when they were driven into Prisons, and loaded with Chains, being destitute, afflicted, tormented, and then brought out to their Execution upon the Rack, Wheel, or Gridiron! they were so far from murmuring, or being disturbed in their Sufferings, that they rejoiced in the midst of their Tortures, and thanked their Executioners for tearing them in pieces! Since then we have had such a cloud of Witnesses who have gone before us, and obtained the end of their Hopes, even the Salvation of their Souls, let us not be discouraged, or be disheartned in our duty;

but

( 31 )

but run with patience the race that is set before us, resolving boldly to follow the Captain of our, as well as their, Salvation. But we cannot become Martyrs for Christ, as did his holy Apostles, and those in the Primitive Times, since our Religion is generally embraced, and the Cross sits as an Ornament on the Foreheads of Kings and Emperours: but although we do not suffer for him in the propagating his Religion among Heathens and Infidels, yet we may suffer nearer home; we have enemies in our breasts, for this house of clay is divided against it self, and wageth more than Civil War within us; so that every Christian is permitted to be his one Executioner, and without swerving from his Duty, to be his own Tyrant and Persecutor; and he that suffers by afflicting his Body, and contending with infamous pleasures, by conquering his Passions, and Subduing his Lusts, by humbling his Pride, and stifling in his Breast the desire of Riches and Honours, may very well boast himself to be in the list and number of these Illustrious Heroes, whom God was pleased to honour with Martyrdom in the first ages of Christianity, and then received them into his Eternal Mansions in Heaven: which brings me to my last Particular.

The

The Reward we purchase by Suffering. *We shall also reign with him.*

Christianity is a life of Faith and Hope fastned on future Promises, which God will accomplish when we have done what he appoints us in the interim to do or suffer; for we cannot expect that he should satisfie our longing, or fulfil our desires to all eternity, unless we fulfil his Will; for our Time of Trial in this Life, we must behave our selves like our forerunner, to be worthy of him, and gain the victory here on Earth, before we Triumph and wear the Crown in Heaven. To describe this place, express its joys, or determine where it is, surpasseth the understanding of Man; since that very Apostle that seemed to have a glimpse thereof hath left us only a negative Description, *which neither Eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor entered into the heart of man to conceive.* Let us not then endeavour to search out what God hath thought to conceal, *Quid animum divinis consiliis minorem fatigas?* say the Poet, Why dost thou vex thy mind with the Decrees of the Almighty beyond thy reach? It is Heaven, what canst thou know? that there is such a place, we may assure our selves, since Truth it self hath spoken it, and in it many Mansions too, where our Souls shall receive the full measure and compliment of

( 33 )

of Happiness, being rewarded with the Participation of Christ's Glory ; and the boundless appetites of those spirits remain compleatly satisfied, In having a full and perfect knowldg and the fruition of the *Beatisfick Vision.*

Knowldg is mans greatest perfection, it distinguishes him from his fellow creatures, and makes him to be Lord over them ; nay, it makes a difference between one man and another ; for by how much the more a man advances in it, by so much he is thought worthier and better than another : this makes us Toil and Labour in its acquest, and willing to increase in sorrow, that we may increase in knowldg. But what is it, we with so much difficulty have acquired ? 'tis no more than that which shall be then, a Mole-hill to the greatest Mountain ; nay, a Drop to the Ocean : For our greatest knowldg is but the least part of what we are ignorant ; and *Socrates* himself said, that he knew nothing. Here indeed we do but darkly apprehend, and can but guess at Causes by their produced Effects ; for if we endeavour to discover the Motions and Operations of the most inconsiderable creature, our understanding is presently gravelled, and our strongest reasoning at a stand, and we are forced

to cry out, *How unsearchable are his Judgments ; and his ways past finding out ?* But there we shall have a full and perfect knowldg, and be able to discern all things in their most Intricate, and hidden Causes ; for our knowldg shall be advanced into a full grown Science, and we shall arrive to the perfect Man, at the measure of the stature, and fullnes of Christ. Here we, like the Spouse in the *Canticles*, seek our Beloved, onely in the dark, view onely the Picture of his Habitation, which is this Visible World, behold only his back-parts in the Glass of his Creatures, and tast somewhat more of him in his comfortable Ordinances, and but sufficient to make us Sick with Love : but hereafter we shall see God face to face, know him as he is ; nay, as we our selves are known ; and knowing him, we shall know all things, for he is all in all. Nor shall we only know him as he is, but enjoy him too ; our Happiness shall consist in the Contemplation of his most Divine Perfections, which must needs create Pleasures as infinite as themselfes, that neither trouble nor sorrow shall interrupt ; for all tears shall be wiped from our Eyes ; here shall be a perpetual joy, without the least mixture of the Gall of Bitterness ; and continual Praises issuing from our mouths ; for the

( 35 )

the *Psalms* says, That those that dwell in his House, will be still praising him. Here the wicked do not approach to hurt us, nor the workers of iniquity to do us any harm; for the oppressor cannot take away our goods, nor the cruel Tyrant deprive us of our lives, we being as far above the envy of the one, as we are the malice of the other. Here a *David* may enjoy his beloved *Jonathan*, and be for ever free from the Fury and Rage of a persecuting *Saul*. Here pious Souls enjoy what *Sorrows* of old could but wish for, the intimate converse of those brave Heroes that have gone before them; and Here with Angels and Spirits of Just men made perfect, we shall always be celebrating the excellencies of the Divine Perfections in the *Beatifick Vision*.

Having an Eye then unto this so exceeding great reward, Let us resolve ( notwithstanding the Malice of Men and Devils) faithfully to adhere to this our profession, to obey its Precepts of suffering, even unto Death, with Patience & Constancy; that at the last our Innocence may break forth as the Lightning, and our just dealings as the Noon-day; and for this Life of Temporal Sufferings, we shall have an Eternal Life of Joy, in his presence, where there is fulness

796  
of it; and at whose right hand there are  
Blessures for evermore.

To which God of his infinite Mercy bring  
us all through Jesus Christ our Lord; to  
whom with the Father, and the Holy Spirit,  
be ascribed, as is most due, all Honour, Glory,  
Praise, Might, Majesty and Dominion, now  
and for evermore.

*The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Love  
of God, and the Fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be  
with us all evermore, Amen.*

---

**F I N I S.**

## Major Minor

1885. Arnold Field C. 1901  
Geographical, the Kukilla  
China's fields, very, the joy of, 1901

George Washington, the first President of the United States, was born in 1732, at a place called Westmoreland, in Virginia. He was the son of a rich planter, and was educated at a school in the neighborhood. When he was about twenty years old, he became a surveyor, and was employed in making out maps of the country. He was a very brave and勇敢 man, and during the American Revolution, he led his troops to victory over the British. He was elected President in 1776, and served for eight years. He died in 1799, at the age of sixty-seven.

卷之三